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This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims**

1. (original) A method for securely communicating financial information, comprising:  
  
    receiving over an electronic computer network a coded message  
  
    comprising an entry in a specified field of a field delimited communication protocol; and  
  
    interpreting said coded message to have a meaning different from a publicly-known meaning for entries in said specified field.
2. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the field delimited communication protocol is the Financial Information Exchange (FIX) Protocol, or a protocol derived therefrom.
3. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the specified field is an order value field.
4. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the specified field comprises a FIX tag 38 entry.

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5. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the encoded message corresponds to a number of shares.

6. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the encoded message corresponds to an Indication of Interest (IOI) for a number of shares.

7. (original) A method for securely communicating financial information, comprising:

encoding a message comprising an entry in a specified field of a field delimited communication protocol, wherein said encoded message is intended to have a meaning different from a publicly-known meaning for entries in said specified field; and

transmitting said encoded message over an electronic computer network.

8. (original) The method of claim 7, wherein the field delimited communication protocol is the Financial Information Exchange (FIX) Protocol, or a protocol derived therefrom.

9. (original) The method of claim 7, wherein the specified field is an order value field.

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10. (original) The method of claim 7, wherein the specified field comprises a  
FIX tag 38 entry.

11. (original) The method of claim 7, wherein the encoded message  
corresponds to a number of shares.

12. (original) The method of claim 7, wherein the encoded message  
corresponds to an Indication of Interest (IOD) for a number of shares.

13. (currently amended) A method for securely communicating financial  
information, comprising:

receiving over a first electronic computer network a first message, said  
first message comprising a first entry in a specified field of a field delimited  
communication protocol;

transmitting over a second electronic computer network, a second  
message, said second message comprising a second entry in said specified field of  
said field delimited communication protocol; and

at least one of said first and second messages being encoded, wherein each  
encoded message is intended to have a meaning different from a publicly-known  
meaning for entries in said specified field;

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wherein, said first and second electronic network, said first and second entries, and said first and second messages are not necessarily distinct.

14. (original) The method of claim 13, wherein the field delimited communication protocol is the Financial Information Exchange (FIX) Protocol, or a protocol derived therefrom.

15. (original) The method of claim 13, wherein the specified field is an order value field.

16. (original) The method of claim 13, wherein the encoded message corresponds to a number of shares.

17. (original) The method of claim 13, wherein the encoded message corresponds to an Indication of Interest (IOI) for a number of shares.

18. (currently amended) The method of claim 13, wherein said first and second messages are both encoded, further comprising:

determining whether corresponding entries in said specified field of said first and second messages match; and

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if the match is successful, transmitting a notification to one or more broker/dealers.

19. (original) The method of claim 18, wherein the transmitted notification is not encoded.

20. (currently amended) The method of claim 13, wherein said first message is encoded, and wherein said transmitting is to a plurality of receivers, further comprising:

receiving from a receiver a reply to said second message; and  
determining whether corresponding entries in the specified field of the first message and said reply to said second message match.

21. (original) The method of claim 20, wherein if the match is successful, transmitting a notification to one or more broker dealers.

22. (original) An apparatus for securely communicating financial information, comprising:

a receiver for receiving over an electronic computer network a coded message comprising an entry in a specified field of a field delimited communication protocol; and

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an interpreter for interpreting said coded message to have a meaning different from a publicly-known meaning for entries in said specified field.

23. (original) An apparatus for securely communicating financial information, comprising:

an encoder for encoding a message comprising an entry in a specified field of a field delimited communication protocol, wherein said encoded message is intended to have a meaning different from a publicly-known meaning for entries in said specified field; and

a transmitter for transmitting said encoded message over an electronic computer network.

24. (original) An apparatus for securely communicating financial information, comprising:

a receiver for receiving over a first electronic computer network a first message, said message comprising a first entry in a specified field of a field delimited communication protocol;

a transmitter for transmitting over a second electronic computer network, a second message, said second message comprising a second entry in said specified field of said field delimited communication protocol; and

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at least one of said first and second messages being encoded, wherein each encoded message is intended to have a meaning different from a publicly-known meaning for entries in said specified field;

wherein, said first and second electronic network, said first and second entries, and said first and second messages are not necessarily distinct.